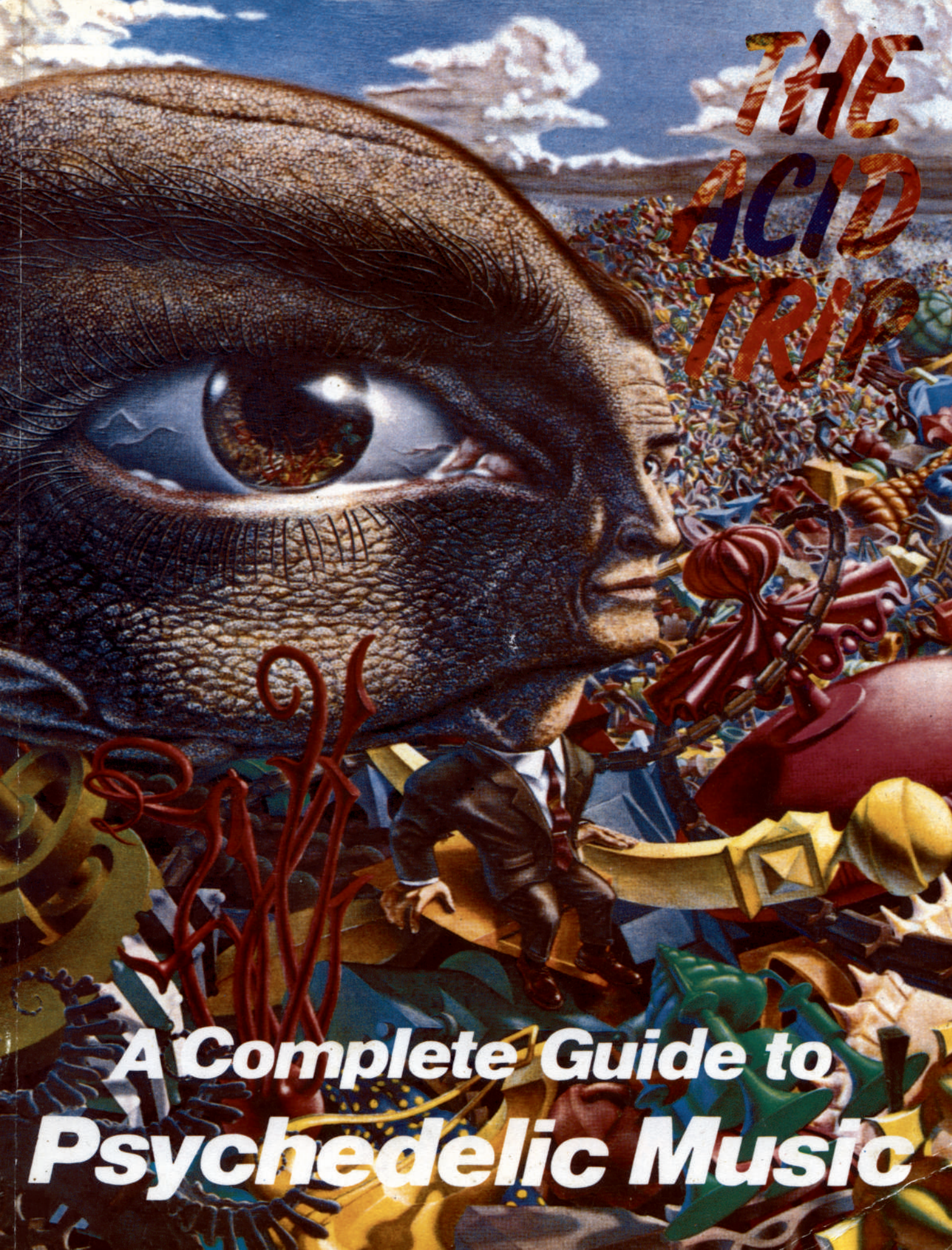

THE ACID TRIP
A Complete Guide to
Psychedelic Music

Part III
The Psychedelic Scene in Texas

While the music world centered on the San Francisco sound another thriving psychedelic scene was emerging in Texas. At the time it went unnoticed and, indeed, unknown to the world at large – completely overshadowed by the events on America's West Coast and, more specifically, in San Francisco. Only in the past few years have many of the Texan groups been discovered and brought to the attention of a wider audience. Part of the reason for people's ignorance about these bands in undoubtedly bound up with the isolation of Texas.

Known as America's 'Lone Star' state, Texans have always tended to pride themselves in their independence. Also in the mid-60s, as artists like **Janis Joplin** and **The Thirteenth Floor Elevators** would find, Texas was still an essentially conservative society and consequently not a place where the press or the music world would expect a music revolution to occur. But it did. The University of Texas was a hot bed for dissidents and Texans are renowned for their anger. The psychedelic music scene was centered on Austin and it was from here that **The 13th Floor Elevators, Shivas Headband** and **The Conqueroo** came. The whole scene was really an expression of social unrest. Kids who walked around stoned out of their minds were expressing their contempt for authority. Bands like **The 13th Floor Elevators, Shiva's Headband** and **Fever Tree** often played in San Francisco and in this way the trappings of that city's psychedelic culture became transplanted in Texas. Although Austin was an important centre, acid punk bands were spontaneously emerging throughout the state. There were **The Moving Sidewalks** in Houston, **The American Blues** in Dallas, **The Minds Eye** and **12am** in San Antonio and many others. Many of these bands recorded some of the finest acid punk to emerge from America in this era.

If one examines their lyrics, many romanticise about the acid experience – for example, practically all of the tracks on the first **Elevators** album, and most of the the cuts on **The Moving Sidewalks** album. **Shiva's Headband** is probably one of the few bands in the hippy tradition with, as an example, *Take Me To The Mountains*. These bands were into acid in a big way – for them acid was an end in itself and this explains some of the bizarre end products that found their way onto vinyl. It should also be noted that these bands were not 'political' or really part of the broader San Francisco-based rock revolution.

American Blues

Personnel:
DUSTY HILL
FRANK BEARD
ROCKY HILL
DOUG DAVIS

Albums:
IS HERE (Karma)
DO THEIR THING (Uni)

This group was originally called **The Warlocks** (different from the 'Frisco **Warlocks** who later became **The Grateful Dead**). Under this name they released two singles *Splash Day* and *If You Really Want Me To Stay* on small independent labels. They also backed Lady Wilde on a non-punk single called *Another Year.* They changed their name to **American Blues** releasing *If I Were A Carpenter* as a single on the Karma record label. This was taken from their first album, which is a combination of heavy rock numbers and psychedelia. The follow-up album developed their psychedelic trip further. Two tracks *Comin' Back Home* and *Dreams* are of particular note. Of course, Dusty Hill and Frank Beard later joined up with Bill Gibbons (ex-**Moving Sidewalks**) to form one of Texas' most successful bands, **ZZ Top.**

Beauregard

An obscure rock and roll band who issued a single *Mama Never Taught Me How To Jelly Roll/Popcorn Popper* on the International Artists label and an album of the same name.

Blackwell

Another rock and roll band who issued an album of the same name and three singles *Wonderful, Almost Gifted* and *Doin' It* on Astro records.

The Bubble Puppy

Personnel:

ROD PRINCE	gtr, vcls
ROY COX	bs, vcls
TODD POTTER	gtr, vcls
DAVID FORE	drms

Album:
A GATHERING OF PROMISES (International Artists No 10) 1969

As Demian:
DEMIAN (abc) 1971

This band started out as **The Bad Seeds**, a **Stones**-influenced combo, who released three singles on the J-Beck label. The first was *I'm A King Bee/Taste of The Same.* The A side sounded similar to **The Stones** version and the B side was also **Stones**-inspired. The third was an **Elevator's** song *All Night Long* which was not released by the band.

The dawning of the psychedelic era saw the band change their name to **Bubble Puppy** after being signed by Lelan Rodger's International Artists label in 1968. They were one of the better groups to record on the label, releasing an album in 1969. Two tracks, *Hot Smoke and Sasafras* and *Beginning* were also issued as singles. Later, two non-LP singles followed – *Days of Our Time* and *What Do You See?.*

Upon the collapse of the International Artists label they took another new name, **Demian**, and released a fine hard rock album on ABC in 1971. Its opening track, the powerful *Face The World*, was also issued as a single.

The Chayns

This was another group discovered by Lelan Rodgers. Their version of *Night Time* is generally regarded as one of the best recordings of the song. Originally released on the independent Chayn Reaction label, Rodgers re-issued it on his own International Artists label and it was a local hit in San Antone. The B side *Live With The Moon* was a tasty instrumental. They cut one further single for International Artists *There's Something Wrong (In this Place)* and two further ones *Run and Hide* and *You* on Chayn Reaction, but none fulfilled the promise of *Night Time.*

The Chocolate Moose

The Chocolate Moose Theme, the B side of their first single appears on the Boulders compilation. This was originally issued on the Spotlite label for whom they made one follow-up single, *Rosie.*

The Clique

Album:
THE CLIQUE (White Whale) 1969

The Clique issued excellent versions of **The Elevators'** *Splash 1,* which was taken from their first album, on two small independent labels Cinema and Scepter, before signing for the more prestigious White Whale recording company for whom they made a string of decidedly inferior singles most of which are featured on the LP.

The Clue

This group have the distinction of recording one of the finest acid punk singles to come from Texas in this era – *She's The Reason/Bad Times.* The B side can now be heard by all on Pebbles Volume 8.

The Conqueroo

Personnel:
ED GUINN
CHARLIE PRITCHARD
GERRY STORM
BOB BROWN

Along with **The Elevators** and **Shiva's Headband, The Conqueroo** were one of the leading bands on the Austin psychedelic scene. All we have to remember them by is just one single *I've Got Time/1 to 3* issued on the Sonobeat label. They were the first hippy group to sign for that label. Both sides of the single sound similar to San Francisco's **Grateful Dead** and **Quicksilver** and feature fine guitar work. The single sold well locally and made some impression in San Francisco, where the group also played. Regretfully, they failed to achieve the success they deserved.

Crystal Chandelier

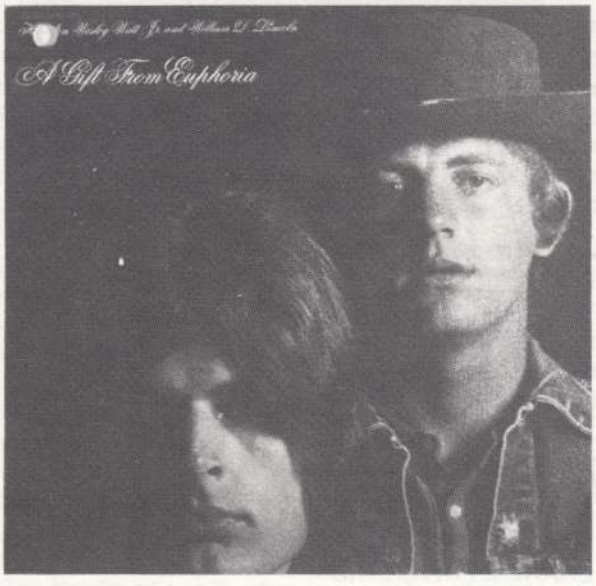
Thought to originate from Texas, the group had just one single *Suicidal Flowers/Land of Love* released on the Cobblestone label in 1969. Fortunately this song which has a distinctively Eastern flavour is included on Pebbles Volume 3.

The Cynics

A Fort Worth-based band who issued a single containing two re-makes of **Yardbirds** songs *You're a Better Man Than I* and *Train Kept A-Rollin'*. The latter number has an amazing feedback/fuzztone.

Endle St Cloud

This group included ex-**Lost and Found** member Peter Black and ex-**Iguanas** member Melinger. They released the final album in the International Artists series *Thank You All Very Much.* Two tracks from this album were released as singles *Tell Me One More Time* and *She Wears It Like a Badge.* Later DF Potter joined the band which became known as **Potter St Cloud.** This line-up released one album entitled *Potter St Cloud* on the Mediart label.



Euphoria

Personnel:
WILLIAM LINCOLN
HAMILTON WESLEY WATT

Album:
A GIFT FROM EUPHORIA (Capitol)

This little known two man band produced one amazingly varied album (see photo) which explored various musical moods from country rock to psychedelia and is well worth a listen if one can obtain a copy. The band also issued one single in 1968 which included two tracks from the album *Hungry Women* and *No Me Tomorrow.* Both songs are also included on **The Mainstream** *Pot of Flowers* album.

Exotics

Very obscure band who released two singles *Come With Me* and *Queen of Shadows* on the local Tad label.

Fever Tree

Personnel:

DENNIS KELLER	vcls
JOHN TUTTLE	prcsn
E E WOLFE	bs
ROB LANDES	kybds, cello, flte, hrmnc
MICHAEL	gtr

Albums:
FEVER TREE (Uni) 1968
ANOTHER TIME, ANOTHER PLACE (Uni)
CREATION (Uni)
FOR SALE (Amplex)

Fever Tree were originally known as **Bostwick Vine,** although no records were released under this name. Later as **Fever Tree** they issued two 45s on Mainstream, *Hey Mister* and *Girl, Oh Girl (Don't Push Me)* – neither took off. They then signed to Uni and their debut single *San Franciscan Girls* was a US hit in 1968. This is also featured on the compilation 21 Kilt Goldens Volume 2 and on their debut album (see photo) which captured the psychedelic mood of the times, particularly on Side 1. Side 2 contained the group's interpretation of **Lennon-McCartney's** *Day Tripper/We Can Work It Out* and **Neil Young's** *Nowadays Clancy Can't Even Sing* which they also released as a single in 1969. It also captures the group in a more mellow mood in *Unlock My Door* and *Come With Me (Rainsong)* which was the flip side to *San Francisco Girls.* Later the band modified its musical style, and **Alan Price's** rock and roll number *I Put a Spell On You* and **The Stones'** *She Comes In Colours* were among their later singles.

The Five Americans

Albums:
I SEE THE LIGHT (HBR) 1966
WESTERN UNION (Abnak) 1967
PROGRESSION (Abnak) 1967
NOW AND THEN (dbl) (Abnak) 1969

After a few singles on independent labels the group finally made the US charts in 1966 with *I See The Light,* the title track of their debut album which successfully merged rock, R&B and ballads. The follow-up album provided two further US hits *Western Union* and *Sound of Love* in 1967. Both received a fair degree of airplay in the UK and the former was covered here by **The Searchers** but did not chart.

The Five Canadians

Another obscure Texan group who issued just three singles. The first *Writing On The Wall* is unique for its unusual organ intro and is included on Pebbles Volume 5. The second was a re-hash of **The Animals'** hit *House of The Rising Sun.*

Floyd Dakil Four

Their debut single *Dance Franny Dance*, a competent rock'n'roll number, is included on Pebbles Volume 1 and was a regional hit, getting airplay as far away as San Francisco. Follow-up *Bad Boy* was also a good rocker. All their songs had a party time flavour to them. But despite two further singles *Kitty, Kitty* and *You're The Kind of Girl* they failed to break through nationally.

The Gentlemen

Little is known about this band but they released a fine single *You Can't Be True* on the nationally distributed Vandan label. The B side *It's A Cry'n Shame* is included on Pebbels Volume 5 and a typical example of Texan punk.

Glory

Personnel:
LINDEN HUNDSON & FRIENDS

Albums:
A MEAT MUSIC SAMPLER (Texas Revolution) 1969

Linden was an engineer at a Texan studio, who had at one time worked with Lelan Rodgers at International Artists records. He produced, engineered and sang the album and one single *Holy Roller* with assistance from friends. The album notes are crazy and the whole exercise is very light-hearted. It is unfortunate only a few hundred copies of the album were pressed as it is reputed to contain some very good music.

The Golden Dawn

Personnel:
GEORGE KINNEY
BOBBY RECTOR
TOM RAMSEY
BILL HALLMARK
BIRD

Album:
A POWER PLANT (International Artists No 4) 1967

After **The Elevators** this was the best album released by International Artists (see photo). Little is known about the band but from the sleeve notes it is clear they were into meditation:

> *"It is vitally necessary that through meditation and self-examination we conceive clearly and distinctly the proper relationship of the body and man; and we must not delay for even as the body is satiated with the fruits of the earth, so the soul may be starving."*

This was a recurrent theme throughout their album, on *This Way Please*, for example, the lyrics state:

'Together we can find
a better state of mind
Just open up your eyes
Beyond your bodily likes
Another way, another day
For you and me to stay
You know you're not above me
But now you're thinking of me
You say you think it's really strange'

The quest for self-examination returns in *Starvation,* which is featured on the Radarscope 1978 EP:

'There comes a time of starvation
And it is true
If you believe in elevation
It will happen to you
You get to re-organise the channels of your thought
And leave behind just what you sought

You got to redefine yourself
If you wish to find
The crystal visions
Of an open mind
And it's easy, it's easy, it's easy
It's all so easy to do'

(from *Starvation*)

Two other tracks, *My Time* and *Every Day* are notable for some fine psychedelic instrumentation, while opening track *Evolution* has an unusual wind chime introduction. This is an excellent LP.

The Headstones

Hailing from the Rio Grande Valley this band issued two good 'punk' singles on the Pharaoh label *Wish You Were Mine* and *Bad Day Blues.* The latter starts with a heavy fuzztone riff which gives way to succato organ and later fine guitar work. Group leader Dave Williams then went on to form heavy group **Seompi** which was based in Austin in the early 70s. This line-up cut two singles *Summer's Coming On Heavy* and *Almost in The Hole.*

Infinite Staircase

This group's only single *Long Hair* produced some of Flower Power's best lyrics:

'Remember Richard Speck in Chicago
And Charles Whitman in the Texas tower
Remember Lee Harvey Oswald .....
They all had short hair and not a flower'

The chorus is followed by a couple of simulated gunshots.

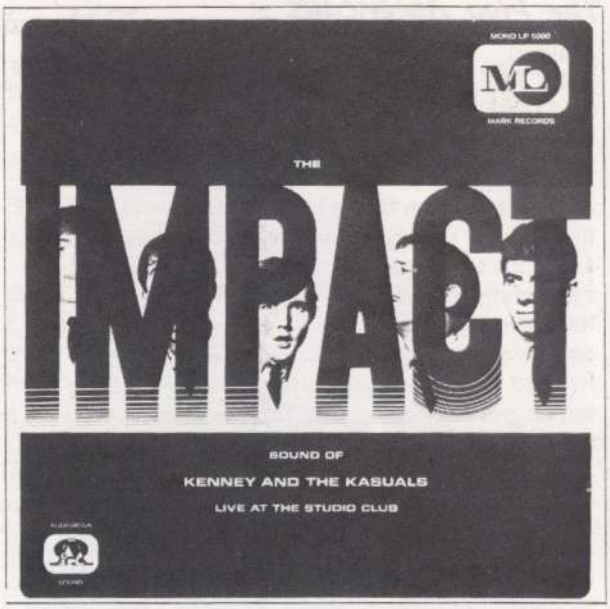
Kenny and the Casuals

Personnel:

KENNY DANIEL	vcls, rhythm gtr
DAVE BLACHLEY	drms
PAUL ROACH.	organ
LES LIGHTFOOT	bs
JERRY SMITH	lead gtr

Album:
LIVE AT THE STUDIO CLUB (Mark) 1966

This band were apparently playing at the La Fontaine Club in Dallas one night as **The Illusions Combo** when manager-to-be Mark Lee arrived, told them they were now called **Kenny and the Kasuals**, and that he was their manager. Their first three singles *Nothin' Better To Do, Don't Let Your Baby Go* and *It's All Right* were recorded in Dallas but attracted little airplay. Their debut album (see photo) saw the group at their best playing cover versions of other people's songs. In fact it wasn't recorded live at the Studio Club at all, but in a local record studio in one afternoon. It certainly has a novel introduction – a guy answering the telephone with music on in the background telling a caller that **Kenny and the Kasuals** are playing the Studio Club. Just 500 copies of the album were pressed, in mono, they were mostly distributed locally



by hand. Over the years the band acquired a reputation among record collectors as one of the best Texas groups ever. By the mid-70s copies of the album were changing hands for hundreds of dollars a time. However, it was re-issued in 1977 and can now be obtained for around £5. The album actually consists of reworkings of many popular songs of the time – *Gloria, Baby Please Don't Go, You Better Move On, All Day and All The Night, Money* and seven other favourites. Certainly, the band were very competent musicians but given the lack of original material it is difficult to understand why the album later became so coveted.

Their next single *Raindrops to Teardrops* received a lot of airplay on the local radio station KLIF. This and follow-up *Journey To Tyme* both entered the charts in Dallas. The latter song was about an acid trip and saw the group venture beyond simple punk for the first time. They issued one final single *See-Saw Ride* which sounded similar to Steppenwolf's *Magic Carpet Ride* having a vacuum cleaner lead-in.

The group ended when Kenny was drafted, although he returned to give a successful farewell concert at the 'Flower Fair'. However, the remaining **Kasuals** soldiered on for a while. Calling themselves **The Truth,** they issued a single *Chimes On 42nd Street* which attracted some airplay, but the group's name was confused with the title of Jeff Beck's album of the same year and it flopped.

NB: Another album of previously unreleased material *Garage Kings* was released in 1979 together with an EP entitled *Kenny and the Kasuals Are Back.*

The Lost and Found

Personnel:
PETER BLACK
JAMES HARRELL
JIMMY FROST
STEVE WEBB
Album:
EVERYBODY'S HERE (International Artists No 3) 1967

Little is known about this group, though undoubtedly they were heavily influenced by **The Elevators.** Their album (see photo) contains an inferior version of *Don't Fall Down* from **The Elevators** first LP and another track *Let Me Be* includes the jug sound which characterized **The Elevator's** albums. The strongest track on the album *There Would Be No Doubt* is included on the Radarscope 1978 EP. The title track and *Forever Lasting Plastic Words* were issued as a single by International Artists. Also of note are two instrumental jams *Zig Zag Blues,* dedicated to the founder of Zig Zag, and *Living Eye* dedicated to Houston's Living Eye-Teen Club – a popular venue for bands of this era. **The Lost and Found** issued one further, non-LP, single for International Artists, *When Will You Come Through/Professor Black,* before splitting. Peter Black later became involved with **Endle St Cloud** whilst James Harrell joined **Potter St Cloud.**

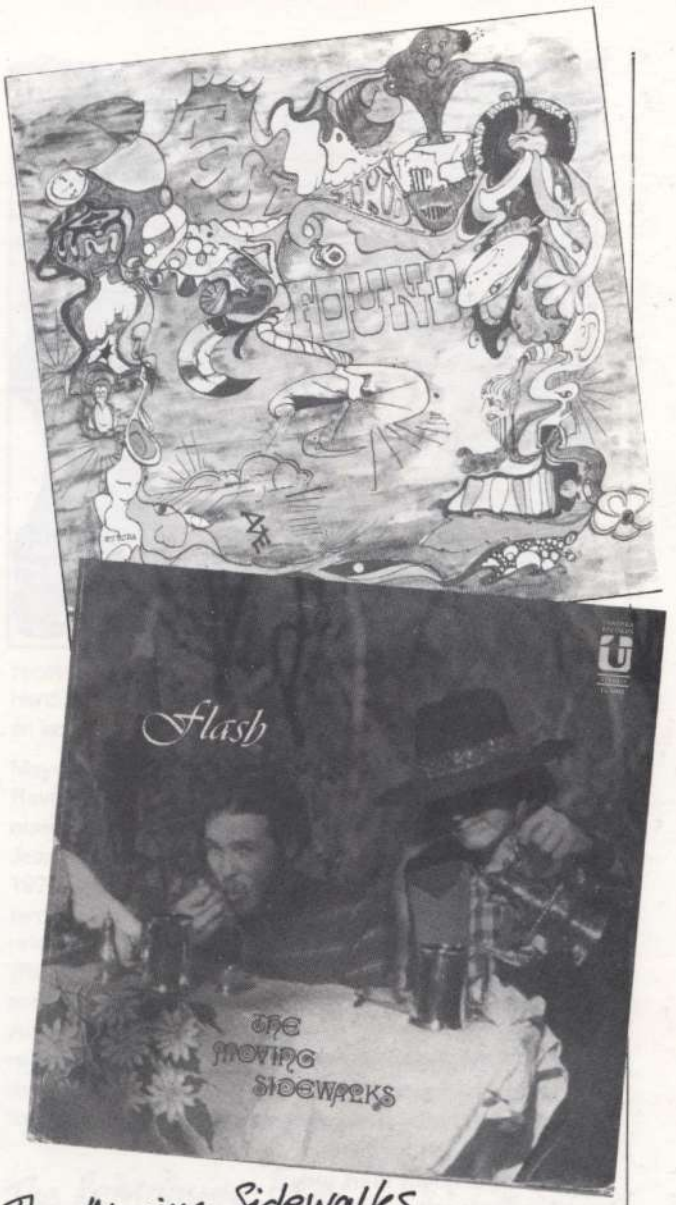
The Mind's Eye

Based in San Antonio this band started out as **The Argyles,** who released one single, the **Beau Brummel's** song *Still In Love With You Baby/Turn On Your Love Light* in 1966. They changed their name to **The Mind's Eye** and released the incredible *Help I'm Lost.* This is a piece of pure psychedelic dementia with swirling guitar organ/violin crescendos and melodramatic vocals. It is included on a bootleg entitled *Acid Dreams,* an excellent collection of classic psychedelic punk. The B side of this single was their earlier A side of **The Argyles.** Group member Steve Perron later became a founding member of **The Children.**

Mouse and the Traps

Personnel:
MOUSE (RONNIE WEISS)
DAVID STANLEY
KEN MURRAY

This group's **Dylan**-soundalike debut single *A Public Execution* made the US charts in 1966. It is also included on the Nuggets compilation. Group member Buggs Henderson had earlier played with another Texas band **The Sensors** who issued two instrumentals *Sen-Sa-Shum* and *Rumble* in the early to mid-60s. **Mouse and the Traps** issued a number of other singles on the Fraternity label and an album was recorded but never released. They also recorded a version of *Psychotic Reaction* using the pseudonym **Positively Thirteenth O'Clock.** This is included on Pebbles Volume 1.



The Moving Sidewalks

Personnel:

BILL GIBBONS	gtr, vcls
TOM MOORE	organ, piano
DON SUMMERS	bs
DAN MITCHELL	drms

Album:
FLASH (Tantara) 1969
99TH FLOOR (Eva) 1982

Another excellent psychedelic group with a very trippy name who sounded similar at times to **The Jimi Hendrix Experience.** They were based in Houston around former graphic art student Bill Gibbons. Indeed **The Sidewalks** once opened a **Hendrix** show in New York and **Hendrix** is reputed to have described Gibbons as one of America's most promising young guitar players. The band issued four singles. The first, *99th Floor,* was a piece of commercial psychedelia which topped the Texan charts for five weeks. But follow-ups *Need Me, I Want To Hold Your Hand* and *Flashback* failed

to consolidate this early success. Their LP is a psychedelic classic and has become a sought after collectors item. Original copies change hands for about £30 each. Opening track *Flashback,* also their final single, was one of the group's finest works. Its subject matter is clear from the lyrics:

'Remember the days when you loved me
Remember the good times and how it used to be
Just a second I'll check your memory
Check it out good and then I know you'll see
Flashback – when you wanted me
Flashback – when you needed me
Flashback – don't you love me no more
Things we did when we were in love
Now your interests are in other stuff
You're so far gone you don't even know my name
There's nobody else but yourself to blame
Flashback – when you wanted me
Flashback – when you needed me
Flashback – don't you love me no more'

Later in the song the singer has the same problem:

'Yes I'll remember the days when I loved you
I'll remember the good times, when I had you
But I'm so far gone I don't even know my name
But I'm really not the one, not the one to blame
I wish I could flashback – 'cos I still want you
Flashback – 'cos I still need you
I can flashback'

(from *Flashback*)

The remainder of Side 1 includes three other great psychedelic rockers *Scoun da Be, You Make Me Shake* and *Pluto – Sept 31st.* This latter track includes a psychedelic haze and more freaky lyrics:

'And as the dark begins to clear
My brain resumes to one-one
Slowly it's all happening
My mind might melt today
But don't relate – too late, too late
Just remind your little body you might be late'

(from *Pluto – Sept 31st*)

The strongest track on Side 2 is *Crimson Witch*, another great psychedelic rocker – the opening lyrics say it all:

'Sittin' here in my room
I'm thinking only of you
But my head's in another place
I'm so far out I can't remember my face'

(from *Crimson Witch*)

The two closing tracks *Eclipse* and *Reclipse* show the group at its most experimental. Undoubtedly this was one of the best psychedelic albums to come out of Texas. With the addition of *99th Floor* and *I Want To Hold Your Hand,* this album was re-issued on the French Eva label and is strongly recommended.

The Outcasts

A punk band based in San Antonio, their single *I'm in Pittsburg,* included on Pebbles Volume 1, is notable for its mouth-organ and catchy drumming. The follow-up *I'll Set You Free* was less successful, however. The band changed to Gallant Records recording *1523 Blair* in 1967. Its amazing psychedelic intro gives way to high speed guitar work, although the vocals could be clearer and the record culminates into a psychedelic haze. This fine example of psychedelic punk is included on *Acid Dreams.*

Plymouth Rock

A hard rock group whose members had played with previous Austin bands **The Sweetarts** and **The Lavender Hill Express.** They issued just one single on the Sonobeat label in 1969, *Memorandum/Just A Start.* It was a fine record but met with limited success. No follow-up was released.

The Mysterians with Question Mark in the middle bottom row

Question Mark and the Mysterians

Personnel:

RUDY MARTINEZ (Question Mark)	
BOBBY BALDERAMMA	gtr
FRANK LUGO	bs
EDDIE SERRATO	drms
FRANK RODRIGUEZ	organ

Albums:

96 TEARS (Cameo Parkway) 1966
ACTION (Cameo Parkway) 1967

The group are included here as they were a Mexican/American group from Texas. However, they moved to Flint, Mitchigan to issue *96 Tears* on their own Pa-Go-Go label. It was then picked up and released by Cameo Parkway. A relentless 'Punk' two note organ sound

ran throughout the record, which is regarded as a classic. It reached No 37 in the UK too. Follow-ups *I Need Somebody, Can't Get Enough of You, Baby* and *Girl, You Captivate Me,* whilst good, were less successful. Eventually, the group faded from the scene unable to disprove the 'one hit wonder' tag.

The Red Crayola

Personnel:

STEVE CUNNINGHAM	gtr, vcls
MAYO THOMPSON	gtr, vcls
RICK BARTHELME	drms

Albums:

THE PARABLE OF THE ARABLE LAND (International Artists No 2) 1967

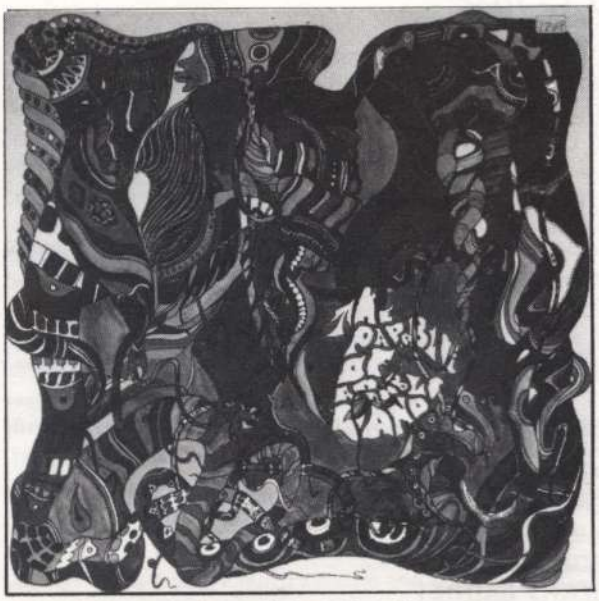
GOD BLESS RED KRAYOLA AND ALL WHO SAIL WITH IT (International Artists No 7) 1968

Related to Mayo Thompson solo LP:

CORKY'S DEBT TO HIS FATHER (Texas Revolution) 1969

Noted for producing some of the weirdest music ever **Red Krayola** were established in September 1966. They began by playing straight rock numbers like *Hey Joe,* but gradually developed the Freeform Freak-out that became part of their trademark. All interested parties were invited to perform in their shows and in effect a companion group (known as **The Familiar Ugly**) was established. When the group was invited by International Artists to record an LP (see photo) in March 1967, **The Familiar Ugly** were featured in the free-form freak-out between each track. However, at this stage as a 'live' attraction **The Krayola** were very much an acquired taste. Their music lacked natural rhythms and structure and was practically impossible to dance to. Once they played at the New Orleans House and they were given ten dollars (to split three ways) and asked to leave after 20 minutes! Nonetheless, in the summer of 1967 they were invited to play at the Berkeley Folk Festival. Their debut album contained some very strange material, aside from the free-form freak-outs. The psychedelia of tracks like the trippy *Hurricane Fighter Plane, Transparent Radiation, Pink Stainless Tail* and *Former Reflections Enduring Doubt* was different from that of the other Texas bands, being formless and improvised. The opening to the title track has to be heard to be believed. **The Krayola** were obviously into acid, though apparently not to the same degree as **The Elevators.**

For their second album **Red Krayola** reverted to a three-piece, dispensing with **The Familiar Ugly.** This contained numerous one and two minute compositions. A change in personnel saw Tommy Smith replace Rick Barthelme on drums. The psychedelic dementia of the earlier album largely gave way to acoustic weirdness. The result was a clearer, simple but still experimental sound. Radar re-issued both of these two albums when they bought the recording rights to the International Artists label in 1978. Although Radar subsequently went bankrupt, so the



records are again deleted, they should not be too hard to obtain. But be warned – they are very much an acquired taste!

Mayo Thompson released a solo album on Texas Revolution, *Corky's Debut To His Father,* which is now an obscure collectors item. He met drummer Jesse Chamberlain in New York in the winter of 1974/5 and reformed **Red Krayola** with Jesse as a two-piece. This line-up gigged in London in 1978, releasing new wave singles *Wives In Orbit/Yik Yak* (Radarscope) in 1978 and 12" single *Micro-chips and Fish/The Story So Far* on Rough Trade in 1979. An album of new wave material, *Soldier Talk* was released by Radarscope in the same year, and two subsequent albums, *Born In Flames* and *Kangaroo* followed on Rough Trade in the early '80s.

The Remaining Few

An obscure band who released just one single, *Painted Air,* on the equally obscure Askew label. This starts with an amazing screeching psychedelic intro which gradually slows in tempo and the lyrics (shown below) are sung to minimum instrumentation with each verse sandwiched by further screeching guitar work – an amazing record!

'Here I lie on my death bed
Recalling things said
As my world slips away
A man stands over me
One final plea
Though I disagree

Colours, daytime and light
Running red light
Other drivers won't yield
People stand without sound
Tears touch the group
And soon dry away'

(from *Painted Air*)

Rubayyat

They released as a single on the International Artists label a fine electric version of *If I Were a Carpenter.* This is included on *Epitaph for Legend,* a compilation of LA material released in 1980.

Satori (nee Dennis Warkentin)

Satori was a multi-instrumentalist based in Houston who released one acid rock single *100 Micrograms of Love/ Time Machine.* He was a virtuoso guitarist, and the A side contains fine guitar leads. The flip is an **Elevators**-like psychedelic haze.

Shiva's Headband

Personnel:

SPENCER PERSKIN	violin, gtr, hrmnca
KENNY PARKER	bs, vcls
BOB TONREID	gtr
JERRY BARRET	drms
SHAWN SIEGEL	kybds (1968 onwards)
SUSAN PERSKIN	occasional vcls

Albums:

TAKE ME TO THE MOUNTAINS (Capitol) 1970
COMIN TO A HEAD (Armadillo) 1972

Shiva's Headband was founded by group leader Spencer Perskin in July 1967. As **The Elevators** grew more unreliable they became, together with **The Conqueroo,** Austin's main live attraction. They are the only band from Austin's psychedelic 60s still playing today. The stimulus for their early songs came from acid, although they had a very different sound from that of **The Elevators.** Their debut single *Kaleidoscoptic* was released on a small independent label, Ignite. It sold well locally and is now a collectors item. Their follow-up *Take Me To The Mountains* was issued on the then new Armadillo label. The group subsequently signed a deal with Capitol and different versions of both debut singles were

recorded on their debut LP *Take Me To The Mountains* (see photo). Although an interesting album, it is not thought to capture the group at their best. The title track was another expression of the hippy sentiments mentioned earlier – let's get out of the city into the country:

'Take me to the mountains
If you please
I will gladly trade the city for the trees
Take me by the hand
Take me to the land
It's the only thing I really understand
(from *Take Me To The Mountains*)

Spencer Perskin's violin is prominent throughout the album, particularly on the beautiful *Song for Peace* and stand-out track *Kaleidoscoptic.* Most of the tracks feature **The Headband's** own unique country rock sound.

During 1968 they spent a few months in California, where they played a few gigs at the Avalon. They were also the resident band at the New Orleans Club in Berkeley for a while. It was during this time that Spencer Perskin played on **Mother Earth's** debut album *Living With The Animals.* Apparently Perskin turned down the opportunity of joining that group and the band returned to Texas. *Homesick Armadillo Blues* on their first LP explains their love of Texas.

As they made little money from the Capitol deal they issued their second LP *Coming To A Head* on the small Armadillo label. As only 1,000 copies were pressed it has become an even rarer collectors item than their first, and is also regarded as superior, capturing the band's sound more effectively. Different versions of two of the album tracks *Country Boy/Such A Joy* were released as a single. The band spent a while in Las Vegas in a vain attempt to set up a string of music clubs before returning to Texas with a changed line-up to issue *Don't Blame Me* in 1976, and their third LP *Psychedelic Yesterdays* two years later.

Sir Douglas Quintet

Personnel:

DOUG SAHM	gtr, vcls
LEON BAETTY	vcls, percsn
JACK BARBER	bs
AUGIE MEYER	organ
JOHN PEREZ	drms

Albums:

THE BEST OF SIR DOUGLAS QUINTET (Tribe) 1965
HONKEY BLUES (Smash) 1968
MENDOCINO (Smash) 1969
TOGETHER AFTER FIVE (Smash) 1970
1+1+1=4 (Phillips) 1970
THE RETURN OF DOUG SALDANA (Phillips) 1971

A child music prodigy, Doug Sahm started playing at the age of five, when he appeared in a talent contest

of KMAC radio in San Antonio, Texas. By the age of seven he could play the steel guitar, mandolin, lead guitar and fiddle! He was just twelve when in 1955 as **Little Doug Sahm** he released his first single entitled *A Real American Joe.* Three years later he was playing in a San Antonio R&B band. His next record *Crazy Daisy* was a small hit locally, but in 1960 *Why Why Why* was a big hit in Texas as were *Crazy Crazy Feeling* 1961 and *Two Hearts In Love* 1962.

Sahm was still unknown outside Texas until in 1964 he met Huep P Meauz who became his producer and put together **The Sir Douglas Quintet.** They tried to reproduce the 'English' sound of groups like **The Beatles** at that time. Their first single *Sugar Bee* flopped but follow-up *She's About A Mover* became a rock and roll classic. It made No 10 in the US and No 15 in the UK. Although an attempt to imitate the English 'beat' groups of that period, it had a raw harshness which was unmistakenly Texan. Their debut album was also released during this period.

Sahm became caught up in the drug scene around 1966 and after getting busted in Texas moved up to San Francisco. There, with an entirely new band, he released a follow-up album *Honky Blues.* This marked a complete departure from the bands earlier commercial sound but was nonetheless a successful mixture of blues, country music and big band arrangements.

1968 saw Augie Meyer join Doug Sahm's band again and Harvey Regan also replaced Jack Barber on bass. In the same year *Mendocino* (named after the picturesque Northern Californian coastal town) was a massive US hit. An album of the same name was issued. It was raw and unsophisticated but apart from the title track included fine songs, notable *At The Crossroads,* later covered by **Mott The Hoople.** Now at the height of their popularity the band gigged regularly at 'Frisco dancehalls such as the Avalon and the Fillmore. For a while they put on an all-Texas show with **Big Brother and the Holding Company** and the visiting **13th Floor Elevators.** The band were now regarded as very much a part of the San Francisco Sound. Two further albums *Together After Five* and *1+1+1=4* were recorded in this era.

When the hippy revolution began to sour Doug returned to Texas, in 1971, releasing *The Return of Doug Saldana* album. Another highly acclaimed album, this amalgamated blues, country music and some of his own compositions. He gigged regularly around Texas in this period, during which **The Quintet** released an album *Future Tense* without Doug Sahm. Augie Meyer, meanwhile, released the first in a series of solo albums *Augie's Western Head Music Co* and Doug Sahm has since recorded a string of further albums.

Sir Douglas Quintet

The Society

Another acid-inspired band which released one single *High and Mighty/Summer Sunset.* The A side sounds like a cross between **The Elevators** and **The Seeds** and the B side is a weird instrumental.

The Stereo Shoestrings

An acid punk band restricted to just one single *Tell Her No/On The Road South.* The B side is featured on *Acid Dreams.* A fine psychedelic guitar/drum introduction develops into an acid daze. This is psychedelic punk at its best!

The Stoics

Personnel:

BILL ASH	ld gtr
AL ACOSTA	ld vcls
SAM ALLEN	drms
ROY QUILLIAM	rhythm gtr
MIKE MARACHEL	bs

The Stoics from San Antonio sound like the early **Rolling Stones** on their sole single *Enough of What I Need/Hate.* Apparently only 150 copies were pressed of this single, which was banned by the local radio station in San Antonio, so consequently it is particularly rare. Both sides are featured on Voxx's 1983 compilation, *Acid Visions.*

The Thingies

This band were passing through Austin on their way from Florida to California, when the owners of Austin's local Sonobeat label heard them playing around the town and offered the band a one-off record deal. The resulting single *Mass Confusion/Rainy Sunday Morning* was an English influenced hard rocker. What happened to them when they continued onto California is not known.

Focus on

The Thirteenth Floor Elevators

ROKY ERIKSON	vcls
TOMMY HALL	jug
BENNIE THURMAN	bs
JOHN IKE WATSON	drms
STACY SUTHERLAND	gtr

Albums:

THE PSYCHEDELIC SOUNDS OF (International Artists No 1) 1966
EASTER EVERYWHERE (International Artists No 5) 1967
'LIVE' (International Artists No 8) 1968
BULL OF THE WOODS (International Artists No 9) 1969

Note:

Two bootleg albums of the group are known to exist:

LIVE AT THE AVALON '66 (released in Italy 1979)
LIVE AT THE FILLMORE '67 (released in England 1980)

The Thirteenth Floor Elevators were formed out of two earlier Austin bands. Stacy Sutherland (gtr), Bennie Thurman (bs) and John Ike Watson (drms) had all played in an outfit called **The Lingsmen** which also included a fourth member – singer Max Rainey. Bennie's electric fiddle gave them a unique sound and they played quite extensively around Texas. It is rumoured that they recorded some singles, although none have been found. Meanwhile, Roky Erikson was playing with another Austin group, **The Spades.** They issued two singles locally on the Zero label. The first *I Need A Girl* was released in April 1965 before Roky joined the group, the second *You're Gonna Miss Me/We Sell Soul* featured Roky on vocals. When Rainey left **The Lingsmen**, Roky joined in his place taking *You're Gonna Miss Me* (later to be the group's first single) with him. **The Elevators** were formed when lyricist and jug-player Tommy Hall was added. Together with his wife, Clementine, he wrote much of the group's material. The group's name, apparently chosen by Tommy's wife, certainly suited the times – the thirteenth letter of the alphabet is M (for marijuana), also most American buildings have no thirteenth floor. **The Elevators** were saying that if you want to reach the thirteenth floor and achieve a new level of consciousness, ride with them. The name was certainly food for speculation.

One of the very earliest psychedelic bands, **The Elevators** claim to be the *first* to advertise themselves as psychedelic, preceeding **The Grateful Dead** by about two weeks. They soon became a popular 'live' attraction in Austin playing at venues like the Jade Room and the New Orleans Club. They also played regularly at La Maison in Houston. They are sometimes thought of as a San Francisco band, probably because they gigged regularly at the Avalon ballroom in San Francisco. They actually settled in San Francisco for two months on one occasion and put on an all Texan show at the Avalon together with **Big Brother and The Holding Company** and **The Sir Douglas Quintet** – indeed it is rumoured that, at one time, **Janis Joplin** almost joined **The Elevators.** However they eventually returned to Texas under pressure from their record company. Those visits to the Avalon were particularly important, though, in forging links between the relatively isolated Texas psychedelic scene and America's West Coast. The band made little impression in Dallas, however, where the authorities blocked their plans to open a Thirteenth Floor Elevators Club.

The Elevators issued their first single *You're Gonna Miss Me/Tried To Hide* (the B side was written by Tommy and Stacey) on a small local label, Contact, in 1965. Then in early 1966 the group was busted and they were all put on probation. From then on relations with the police soured. The Texas public in the mid-60s just was not ready for drugs and the

band was constantly hounded by the police. Later when Lelan Rodgers became their manager he would vacuum their van to remove any trace of the drugs before they left for gigs because he knew the police would be sure to vacuum it themselves when the group arrived! Also in early '66 friction developed in the band and Bennie Thurman left to be replaced by Ronnie Letheran.

Eventually Lelan Rodgers discovered the band and signed them to his new International Artists record company. Their first single was re-issued and actually entered the US charts. It is also featured on the Nuggets compilation and on their debut album (see photo) which was recorded in Dallas in the same year but issued during the group's stay in California. To quote from the sleeve notes:

> *"Since Aristotle man has organised his knowledge vertically in separate and unrelated groups ... Science, Religion, Sex, Relaxation, Work etc. The main emphasis in his language, his system of storing knowledge, has been on the identification of objects rather than relationships between objects ... "*
>
> *"Recently, it has been possible for man to* chemically *alter his mental state and thus alter his point of view (that is, his own basic relationship with the outside world which determines how he stores his information). He then can restructure his thinking and change his language so that his thoughts bear more relation to his life and his problems, therefore approaching them more sanely.*
>
> *"It is this quest for pure sanity that forms the basis of the songs on this album."*

So *Roller Coaster* is about the discovery of this new purpose to man's life and *Splash 1* (later issued as a single) 'describes a meeting with a person who radiates the essence of the quest' hence the opening lyrics:

> 'I've seen your face before
> I've known you all my life'
> (from *Splash*)

Reverberation dealt with how a person, who organised his knowledge in the right way, could overcome problems of doubt – that cause of negative emotions which hampered all constructive thought. *Don't Fall Down* referred to the care that had to be taken to maintain this chemically altered mental state. In a subsequent interview, Erikson claimed that *Fire Engine*, the track with the unusual siren introduction, was an attempt to portray what it would be like to ride on a fire engine for fun rather than to fight a horrific fire, hence the opening lyrics:

> 'Let me take you to the empty place on my fire engine'

but the empty place would be pronounced to sound like DMT place (DMT being dimethylatriptamine, a drug giving a fifteen minute hallucination when smoked). *You Don't Know* explained the differences between persons of the old and new states of mind. Prominent

throughout these and the other tracks on this album would be Tommy Hall's jug-playing, which gave the group their unique and distinctive sound. It was on the insistence of Tommy Hall that another track from their first LP *Reverberation* was released as their second single, for the record company, with an eye on the charts, had wanted to release the more commerical *I'm Gonna Love You Too. Reverberation* was followed by *Before You Accuse Me,* but neither achieved the success of their first single. Police pressure on the band grew and a split emerged in their ranks over drugs. All were heavily into acid except John Ike Watson. Indeed, Erikson was reputed to have taken it over 300 times. Eventually the rest of the group began to view Watson as part of the establishment and he left. The group retreated to Kerrville, a small hill town in the countryside and two new members Danny Thomas (drms) and Danny Galindo joined. This new line up set to work on their follow-up LP.

Easter Everywhere (see photo) was released in the Autumn of '67. Tommy Hall chose the title which came from the idea that one could be born again and changed into a better person. One track from this album *She Lives* was issued as a single. The album contained their own interpretation of **Dylan's** *It's All Over Now, Baby Blue,* and most of the songs on Side 2, in particular, are less frenzied and more restrained than the compositions on their earlier album.

The band had always been underpublicised. This was partly the result of a deliberate policy of Lelan Rodgers to create a certain mystique around them and partly the result of the record company's reluctance to push a band they did not understand, but eventually this became a disadvantage. *Easter Everywhere* may have sold much better with more publicity. Also the band, and Roky in particular, were becoming increasingly unreliable and missing gigs and the record company tried to have him committed to a hospital for a rest. Towards the end of 1968 Roky was busted again and, upon claiming to be a Martian (he says to avoid imprisonment), the authorities committed him to Rusk State Hospital for the criminally insane in early 1969. Another group member, Stacey Sutherland, was also busted and ended up in the State prison. Prior to this, in late 1968, the 'live' LP (see photo) was issued, although apparently it failed to capture the band at anything like its best. This contained five songs not featured on their studio albums – **Bo Diddley's** *Before You Accuse Me* (also issued as a single by the group), *I'm Gonna Love You Too, Everybody Needs Somebody To Love* and two original compositions *You Gotta Take That Girl* and *You Can't Hurt Me Any More.*

Without Erickson and Sutherland the group soon fell apart when Tommy Hall quit Texas for California. Their final LP *Bull Of The Woods* was eventually released posthumously by the record company. The group had wanted it called *Beauty and the Beast* and their recording work was incomplete when they split. Their usual songwriting duo of Erickson and Hall was reduced to just one credit on this album – *Never Another,* which was one of the strongest and most demented tracks. Erickson also wrote that haunting final track *May the Circle Remain Unbroken.* Almost all of the remaining material was written by Stacy Sutherland, often in conjunction with Tommy Hall. Musically this was possibly the band's finest album, Sutherland's *Street Song* and *Rose and the Thorn* both containing some fine guitar work. Two other tracks, by no means the strongest, *Scarlet and Gold/ Livin' On* were released on a single which flopped.

Rocky Erickson spent three years in the mental hospital – and it took a court case to get him out. Tommy Hall, too, later became another acid victim. Certainly **The Elevators** took the psychedelic experience to heart and were more heavily into LSD than any other band.

When Radar acquired the recording rights to International Artists' material they re-issued their first two LPs. Although now deleted again, these should not be difficult to obtain. *She Lives* from their second LP is also featured on a promotional EP (along with tracks by **Red Krayola, The Lost and Found** and **The Golden Dawn**) issued on Radarscope in 1978. All twelve International Artists albums were re-issued as a twelve box set in 1979.

Once out of hospital Roky made an abortive attempt to re-form **The Elevators** with John Ike Watson in 1972. However, he has subsequently made a number of recordings *Red Temple Prayer (Two Headed Dog)/ Starry Eyes* with Blieb Alien in 1975 and *Bermuda/ The Interpreter* on Rhino in 1977 (also issued by Virgin in England). Backed by **The Aliens** (Duane Aslaksen (gtrs), Bill Miller (elec auto harp), Steve Burgess (bs) and Fuzzy Furioso (drms)) he later issued an album *Roky Erickson and the Aliens* on CBS in 1980.

Thursday's Children

The band's debut single *You'll Never Be My Girl,* a typical punk number for this era, is included on Pebbles Volume 5. Later they released two singles *Air Conditioned Man* and *Help, Murder, Police,* which are about the most sought after on the International Artists label, before turning to rock and roll. A previously unreleased number *A Part of You,* perhaps their best effort, is included on *Epitaph For A Legend.*

The Tracers

A mid-West punk band whose sole single *She Said Yeah* received considerable airplay in the Oklahoma area. A hard rocker it featured a long drum solo from their 15 year old drummer.

The 12 AM

This group came from San Antonio. Their sole single *The Way I Feel* is included on Pebbles Volume 5 and is, perhaps, one of the best punk singles to come out of Texas in this era. With more airplay it could have made the charts.

The Wig

Released two singles on small labels in Texas. The first, *Crackin' Up* is included on Pebbles Volume 1. This featured competent guitar work but lacked commercial appeal and when follow-up *Drive It Home* failed to happen the band folded.

The Yellow Payges

Personnel:

DAN HORTER	vcls, hrmnca, maracas
BOB BARNES	vcls, bs
BILL HAM	gtrs, vcls
DAN GORMAN	drms, percsn

Album:

THE YELLOW PAYGES VOL 1 (Uni) 1968

This competent Fort Worth band exhibited a variety of musical styles on their sole album (see photo). The beauty of slow numbers like *Moonfire* and *Never Put Away My Love For You* contrasts with hard rock cuts like *Crowd Pleaser* and *Devil Women* and the rock'n' roller *Boogie Woogie Baby.* However, they lacked that bit of magic to distinguish them from the 'also rans' and, consequently, failed to attain wider recognition.

The Zakary Thaks

Personnel:

CHRIS GERNIOTTIS	vcls
REX GREGORY	bs
PETER STINSON	rhythm gtr
JOHN LOPEZ	ld gtr
STAN MOORE	drms
MIKE TAYLOR	

Mike Taylor had played earlier with **The Bad Seeds** (who later became **Bubble Puppy**) and also released two singles as Michael – *Will You Ever Change?* and *Arkansas.* **Zakary Thaks** were one of Corpus Christi's top groups in this era. The lyrics to their debut single *Bad Girl*, a local hit in Texas, were written by vocalist Chris Gerniottis and the music was written by the group collectively. An interesting punk number, *Bad Girl* has a snappy guitar introduction and is included on Pebbles Volume 2. It's B side was an effective re-work of the Ray Davies song *I Need You.* Originally released on the local J-Beck label this single was also issued nationwide by Mercury. However, the follow-up *Face To Face,* whilst featuring some fine guitar work, lacked commercial appeal. Its flip side was a routine blues number *Weekday Blues.* Their third single *Please* failed to reverse this downward trend and their fourth effort *Mirror of Yesterday* showed the group mellowing, with the brash punk style of their earlier compositions being discarded in favour of group harmonies and this one deserved better success. *My Door*, their fifth single, illustrated the band's musical progression and featured powerful guitar work and drumming. However, the song itself was weak, lacking commercial appeal, but the flip *Green Crystal Ties* again featured fine guitar work and was the band's best psychedelic track. Mercury, however, did not take up their option to release any of the bands material after *Bad Girl* and after one further mediocre single *Everybody Wants To Be Somebody* the band split.

Although they failed to make it nationally, **Zakary Thaks** are worth checking out and all six singles (plus flip sides) are included on a bootleg LP issued by Moxie in 1980.

Price: £6.95p UK
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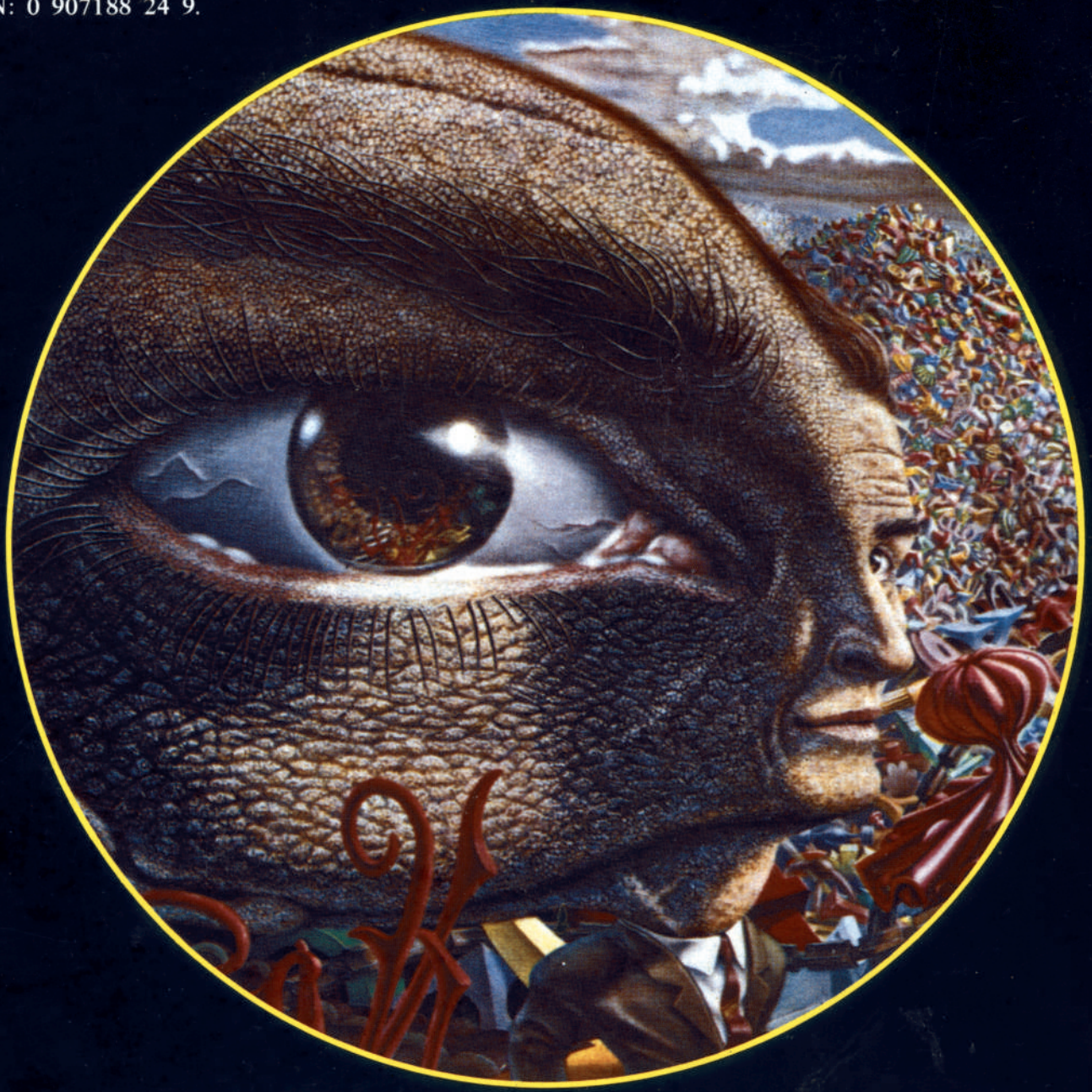

What social and political factors helped create the Hippy culture of the late '60s? How influential was LSD on psychedelic music? What has been psychedelia's long term influence on popular music? Why was the West Coast of the USA the centre and catalyst of psychedelia? How did the hippy psychedelic rock bands differ from the psychedelic punk bands in their music and expectations? Has psychedelia a future in the 80's?

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